

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A sheet processing apparatus comprising:

a compiling tray for forming a sheet bundle by sequentially collecting sheets supplied thereto;

a sheet alignment portion for aligning sheets supplied to said compiling tray;

a pressing member, provided in such a way as to be able to advance and retract in a direction of thickness of the sheets collected in said compiling tray, for holding sheets already collected in said compiling tray and aligned in said sheet alignment portion when a new sheet is supplied to said compiling tray; and

a controller that controls said pressing member according to a thickness of sheets collected on said compiling tray,

wherein said pressing member is provided in such a way as to advance and retract between an advancing position, at which said pressing member presses sheets on said compiling tray, and a retreating position at which said pressing member does not hinder the sheets on said compiling tray from being discharged therefrom, and

advancing and retracting operations of said pressing member vary according to whether or not folding is performed on sheets newly supplied to said compiling tray.

Claim 2 (Cancelled).

Claim 3 (Original): The sheet processing apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

a guide member, provided in such a way as to be able to be interlocked with said pressing member, for guiding a sheet newly supplied to said compiling tray.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): The sheet processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the advancing and retracting operations of said pressing member vary according to ~~whether or not folding is performed on sheets newly supplied to said compiling tray, and~~ according to what supply portion supplies sheets newly to said compiling tray, ~~or according to a thickness of sheets newly supplied to said compiling tray.~~

Claim 5 (Original): The sheet processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said pressing member presses sheets already collected on said compiling tray before a leading end of a sheet newly supplied to said compiling tray touches the sheets already collected thereon, and wherein said pressing member goes away from the collected sheets before a rear end of the newly supplied sheet is discharged onto said compiling tray.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): A sheet processing apparatus comprising:
a compiling tray for receiving and stacking conveyed sheets;
a longitudinal reference wall for performing alignment of sheets stacked on said compiling tray by aligning rear ends of the sheets; ~~and~~

an alignment portion that gives a conveyance force to sheets sequentially supplied to the compiling tray to push the supplied sheets against the longitudinal reference wall; and

a controller that controls a ~~reference~~ position of the alignment portion ~~in a longitudinal alignment~~ in a direction of thickness of sheets stacked on said compiling tray, ~~for providing a predetermined conveyance force to sheets sequentially supplied to said compiling tray, and for pushing said sheets against said longitudinal reference wall.~~

Claim 7 (Previously Presented): The sheet processing apparatus according to claim 6, wherein a longitudinal alignment portion conveys the sheet to said longitudinal reference wall by using a member that turns by simultaneously touching a surface of said sheet.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): The sheet processing apparatus according to claim 6, wherein the further comprising: ~~[[a]]~~ controller ~~that~~ controls the reference position in said longitudinal alignment according to the number of sheets stacked on said compiling tray.

Claim 9 (Previously Presented): The sheet processing apparatus according to claim 7, wherein said longitudinal alignment portion conveys sheets to said longitudinal reference wall when placed at a sheet alignment position, and

wherein said longitudinal alignment portion once moves from said sheet alignment position to a sheet pressing position in synchronization with predetermined sheet conveying timing, and then returns to said sheet alignment position.

Claim 10 (Cancelled).

Claim 11 (Cancelled).

Claim 12 (Previously Presented): A sheet processing apparatus comprising:

- a compiling tray for receiving and stacking supplied sheets;
- a longitudinal reference wall for performing alignment of sheets stacked on said compiling tray by aligning rear ends of said sheets;
- a first moving-aside unit for moving said sheets aside toward said longitudinal reference wall at a rear end side of said sheets supplied to said compiling tray; and
- a second moving-aside unit for moving said sheets aside toward said longitudinal reference wall at a leading end side of each of said sheets, wherein said second moving-aside unit is provided closer to said leading end side than said first moving-aside unit;
- a conveyance force of said second moving-aside unit is used for moving said sheets aside toward said longitudinal reference wall, and set therein in such a way as to be variable; and
- said second moving-aside unit is set in a manner that varies according to whether or not folding is performed on sheets stacked on said compiling tray.

Claim 13 (Original): The sheet processing apparatus according to claim 12, wherein said second moving-aside unit is enabled to move in a direction of thickness of a sheet bundle accommodated in said compiling tray.

Claim 14 (Original): The sheet processing apparatus according to claim 12, wherein said second moving-aside unit changes a position thereof in a direction of thickness of a sheet bundle according to the sheet bundle stacked on said compiling tray.

Claim 15 (Original): The sheet processing apparatus according to claim 12, wherein said second moving-aside unit is set in a manner that varies according to whether or no folding is performed on sheets stacked on said compiling tray.

Claim 16 – 23 (Cancelled).